

arcade express

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N.A.P. SCUTTLES ODYSSEY³

The Odyssey division of North American Phillips isn't going to introduce an enhanced version of the current O-2 after all. Rather than pin its corporate hopes on the Odyssey³, the manufacturer has elected to push ahead at full speed with development of a true computer. This new system, say officials at the Knoxville, Tenn., electronics company, should make its debut during second-half 1984.

The now-aborted Odyssey-3 was designed to offer greatly improved graphics, modem-connect capability, a revamped voice unit, redesigned joysticks and other niceties, all in a package compatible with existing Odyssey-2 cartridges. The industry observers queried by ARCADE EXPRESS generally attribute the NAP move to a perception on the part of the company that the O-3 did not advance far enough technologically to be truly competitive against the slew of low-cost computers hitting the market right now.

MICROFUN'S MINER 2049ER FOR THE COLECOVISION IS READY TO SHIP

Mike Livesay has completed all design work on the first cartridge for the ColecoVision to be published by an independent software house. MicroFun has already published Livesay's Apple II

translation of Bill Hogue's superb climbing game and is confident that "Miner 2049er" will be just as irresistible to videogamers as it is to computerists.

"It's even better than the Apple version," crows MicroFun's ebullient president Stan Goldberg. The ColecoVision edition will have eleven screens, one more than the original game, and several will be unique to this 24K cart.

DATA AGE FILES CHAPTER 11

Unable to dispel retailer ennui generated by its initial group of releases, Data Age has filed for Chapter 11. The publisher made its entry with a lineup of five cartridges for the Atari 2600 during the 1983 gift-giving season. Although "Encounter at L-5" and, to a lesser extent, "Airlock" drew some praise from electronic gaming critics, overall reaction to programs such as "Bugs" and "Sssnake" was lukewarm. Subsequent to this disappointing start, Data Age published "Journey's Escape" and "Frankenstein", two considerably better titles, but the improvement may have come a little too late. Data Age has scored at least one notable coup during its short existence, however, by becoming the first home game company to sell a title ("Journey's Escape") to a coin-op manufacturer (Midway).

Data Age had announced the licensing of "Mr. Bill" for use as a video-game character, but the publisher had not revealed any concrete development plans at the time of the bankruptcy filing. The fate of this and other Data Age projects is still to be decided.

PUT A COVER ON A TRS-80

Throw away that static-electricity-laden plastic cover on your TRS-80 Model III! The "Computer Clothes Cover" is a grey and black cotton, lint-free, washable, fully lined, no-iron cover that's just styled for your computer. For \$35, it's a good-looking way to protect the machine, from Home Works, 799 Broadway, #325, New York, New York 10003.

VECTREX READIES LIGHT PEN; PLANS 3-D, FULL-COLOR CART

Cot an urge to see your own cartoon come to life on screen? The Vectrex light pen may be just the thing for you. The under-\$40 pen comes with an art cartridge so even gamers with 10 thumbs can do full-scale animation right on the Vectrex screen. Additional carts using the pen are also coming, including a music program, another more elaborate animation cartridge, and an educational game casting the arcader as the pilot of a mail plane as he learns the basics of geography. The plane crosses open territory until it reaches the correct continent, then the screen zooms down to the nation, then the specific city the letter must reach.

Vectrex plans some more wizardry for this June's Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago where they'll show a 3-D, full color game. They promise this miracle uses the existing hardware, and the color doesn't come from an overlay! Ceneral Consumer Electronics is also working on a keyboard to turn the Vectrex into a computer. The product will be first shown in June along with five games utilizing the computer's functions.

Meanwhile, the hot new Vectrex game "Web Wars" will be featured in a contest, details to follow. There are 20 levels in this perimeter-invasion game, with a new alien introduced in each. Few gamers have witnessed the nasty on level 20, and the contest will give prizes to Vectrex players who prove they've laid eyes on this ultimate baddie!

HOLY VIDEO! IT'S BASEBALL!

Davka Corp. has a couple of reverent educational games for Apple and Atari computers. "Bible Baseball" lets you play ball, but the action depends on your correct answers to questions about the Old Testament. The program provides runners, diamond and scoreboard, then lets you play the computer or head-to-head with a friend. If you'd rather get your Bible history from arcade-style gaming, then "The Game of Jericho" is for you. Fight the battle of Jericho, knocking down the walls with blasts from a ram's horn. Cet the set for \$45.50 plus \$2 handling from Davka, 845 N. Michigan Ave., #843, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

GET A FREE JOYSTICK BUT "NO ESCAPE"

Imagic promises every gamer a free Zircon joystick when they return proof-of-purchase from the "No Escape" VCS-compatible game. "No Escape", designed by Michael Creene, pits Jason against the Furies in the Temple of Aphrodite. Players must break through the temple's roof to destroy the guard-Furies and escape on the winged horse Pegasus.

The joystick, valued at \$15.95, is the highest premium ever offered in a single game promotion. This gourmet stick should make the adventure even more playable, as players try to destroy the Furies by throwing rocks at them, in eight levels of conflict.

MACNAVOX SUES BALLY FOR PAC-MAN ROYALTIES

North American Phillips says Magnavox holds the exclusive license for certain videogame board circuitry that was licensed to Bally in 1976. The company further contends that this technology was used in the Bally-Midway "Pac-Man" machine, as well as in several other coin-operated videogames.

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IOWA TOWN NAMED VIDEOGAME CAPITOL You probably never would have guessed it, but Ottumwa, Iowa is the "Video Game Capitol of the World". Iowa's Governor Terry Branstad proclaimed Ottumwa the world's hottest video gaming city in conjunction with the Amusement Game Manufacturer's Assoc., and Atari. In a day of festivities, the Governor made the presentation to Ottumwa's Mayor Jerry Parker, and Walter Day, manager of the Twin Galaxies Arcade in Ottumwa, thanking them for "providing a forum for fun family entertainment." The ceremony was capped by a joint St. Pat's Day/Video Game Parade. Appearing in the celebration were Iowa Senators Charles Grassley and Roger Jepsen, and Congressman Jim Leach, as well as Pac-Man himself. Congratulations to Ottumwa (home of MASH's Radar O'Reilly) for knowing how to keep the home folks having fun!

A NEW LIGHT SHINES OVER THE FROZEN NORTH Sydney Development Corp. is the first Canadian company to enter the computer software games market in a big way, according to Sydney's president T. Williams. Sydney just acquired Artech Integrated Accessories, now to be known as Sydney's Video Games/Educational Software Division. Williams announced the goal of the new division to be production of a number of quality software game packages, and went on to say "We have just negotiated exclusive North American cartridge and coin-op rights for..the comic strip characters from "B.C." and "Wizard of Id"." The next title from Sydney will be "Quest for Tires", incorporating the comic heroes from the two strips.

The Sydney spokesman also announced that their game "Evolution", which the company cites as the first major game to come down from Canada, will soon be available for the Commodore 64 and IBM PC, with editions to follow later for Coleco, TI, Spectra Video and the Atari computers. "Evolution" was originally marketed for the Apple II computer.

COIN-OP COMPANIES CUT NEW PRODUCT OFFERINGS The saturation of the coin-op market - there are simply too many machines even for the expanding market - has set off a wave of retrenchment in the area of new product development. At the industry's recent AOE trade show, there were many fewer new games than at similar events over the last couple of years. Manufacturers are playing it conservative, a situation that's not likely to change until the arcade operators and their distributors show more enthusiasm for risking capital on new entries.

The star of the 1983 AOE was Cinematronics' laser disc adventure, "Dragon's Lair". Players control breathtakingly beautiful on-screen cartoon characters on a perilous journey through the rooms of a sinister castle.

Further evidence of the current coin-op trend is the increasing stress on convertible games. These allow the arcade owner to save dough by salvaging the reusable hardware of an old title as the housing for boards which turn the machine into an essentially new game. Data East's success with "Burgertime" has greatly enhanced this idea's appeal to many.

VIDEOGAMES TAKE TO THE AIRWAVES "The Screen Fiend" is a syndicated radio show all about videogames, produced by Audio Inventions, P.O.Box 240, Mt. Ephraim, NJ 08059. They'll provide your qualified radio station with five 60-second shows free of charge. Each contains news and views about the latest games, home video systems, accessories and newly emerging technology. Programs contain a 30-second commercial, plus a witty line of gab to keep listeners glued to their radios. Call:800-257-5858.

PERMA POWER GIVES You may never use batteries again after you buy the
GAMERS A CHARGE Coleco "Perma Power" Battery Eliminator and AC Adapter.
 It takes the place of a 9-volt, or 4 "C" batteries, and
also functions as an AC adapter in products that have AC jacks. Now you'll
never have to worry about having the power play out right in the middle of
"Head-to-Head Baseball", since for \$9.95 you can eliminate batteries forever.

KEYSTONE KAPERS "Keystone Kapers", the 25th Atari-compatible cartridge
LETS ARCADERS from Activision, pits Keystone Kop Kelly against Harry
KATCH THE KROOK Hooligan in a chase through a 1920's department store.
 The on-screen "store security scanner" helps the player
spot the closest elevator or escalator when Harry flees the floor on his way
to the roof and escape. Keystone Kapers, reminiscent of the scatterbrained
comic cops from early movies, was programmed by Garry Kitchen.

Packed with "Keystone Kapers" is a rub-and-win card, the first promotion
of this type in videogaming. Rub the covered squares and catch three crooks
in a row to qualify for one of the prizes which range from \$5000 savings
bonds, to portable radios, model airplanes, and 1500 beach balls. Even if
you don't win, you can still benefit from the Mystery Rebate. Covered squares
across the bottom of the card list Activision titles that the company will
honor with a rebate toward the purchase price.

HERE'S RAPID FIRING Questar Controls has a \$12.95 "Blaster" that converts
WITH NO SORE THUMBS the firing button on any joystick into a machine-gun
 trigger. The electronic, adjustable-speed switching
device lets you get off from one to 20 shots per second. It doesn't have to
be plugged and unplugged each time you change games, since you can shut it
off for games where rapid fire would be inappropriate. "Blaster!" fits the
Atari 2600, Atari 4-8-1200 computers, ColecoVision, and VIC-20. Write to
Questar Controls, 670 N.W. Pennsylvania Ave., Chehalis, Was.98532.

YOU ARE THE JURY "Jury Trial" is a game for the Apple from Navic Software.
BUT THE COMPUTER The gamer is the prosecutor and his opponent is an un-
IS THE JUDGE scrupulous defense attorney. Choose a case from thou-
 sands of possible scenarios, find the facts, select the
jury, then try to prove your case in court. This highly unusual strategic
game requires every bit of your wit. Get it for \$29 from Navic Software,
Box 14727, North Palm Beach, Fla.33408, or call 800-327-2133.

VIDEO TAPE TEACHES Independent Cinema Artists & Producers is distributing
"PAC-MAN" STRATEGY a video tape program, "Championship Pac-Man". It
 teaches playing techniques, and is currently airing on
some Warner Amex Cable stations. Canadian cable fans also will see the pro-
gram in the next few weeks. Ken French, champion "Pac-Man" player, shows his
strategy and reveals patterns he says will help you play more and spend less.
French talks the gamer through a winning round, until the screen breaks down
at the end of the program. For information, contact ICAP, 625 Broadway, New
York, NY 10012, or call Kempton Werner, 412-287-4705.

JOURNEY'S JOURNEY Data Age's "Journey's Escape" holds the distinction of
HEADS BACK HOME being the first home videogame title licensed for pro-
 duction as an arcade machine. Now comes news that
events have taken this property full-cycle. Midway has now reportedly sold
rights to produce a home version of its multi-scenario quarter-snatcher to
Coleco for the ColecoVision.

HARRY JUMPS BACK TO TOP OF E.G. POPULARITY POLL Like the saying goes, you just can't keep a good man down. This month man proved himself master over the apes when "Pitfall" bounced back into first month again, narrowly beating out "Donkey Kong" for top place honors. Meanwhile ColecoVision cartridges fill six of the top fifteen popularity slots; it seems that "Star Raiders" is always going to be the number one game under the computer division, and "Donkey Kong" continues as the nation's most popular coin-op.

POSITION THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	TIMES ON LIST	CAME TITLE	SYSTEM	MANUFACTURER
<u>MOST POPULAR VIDEOGAME CARTRIDGE:</u>					
#1	# 6	8	Pitfall	Atari 2600	Activision
2	1	8	Donkey Kong	ColecoVision	Coleco
3	2	7	Zaxxon	ColecoVision	Coleco
4	3	4	Ladybug	ColecoVision	Coleco
5	8	4	Turbo	ColecoVision	Coleco
6	4	4	Advanced Dungeons & Dragons	Intellivision	Mattel
7	10	8	Frogger	Atari 2600	Parker Brothers
8	9	6	Defender	Atari 2600	Atari
9	7	4	River Raid	Atari 2600	Activision
10	-	New	Raiders of the Lost Ark	Atari 2600	Atari
11	-	New	Attack of the Timelord	Odyssey-2	Odyssey
12	-	New	Mouse Trap	ColecoVision	Coleco
13	5	8	Venture	ColecoVision	Coleco
14	12	3	Vanguard	Atari 2600	Atari
15	-	2	K.C.'s Krazy Chase	Odyssey-2	Odyssey

MOST POPULAR COMPUTER GAME:

#1	# 1	15	Star Raiders	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
2	2	13	Pac-Man	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
3	4	14	Castle Wolfenstein	Atari/Apple	Muse
4	3	8	Centipede	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
5	6	2	Miner 2049er	Atari/Apple	Big Five/Micro Fun
6	-	New	Shamus	Atari 4-8-1200	Synapse
7	9	5	Choplifter	Atari/Apple	Broderbund
8	-	14	Missile Command	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
9	7	6	Wizardry	Apple	Sir-Tech
10	-	New	Defender	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari

MOST POPULAR COIN-OP VIDEOGAME:

#1	# 1	9	Donkey Kong	Nintendo
2	3	6	Donkey Kong, Jr.	Nintendo
3	6	9	Dig-Dug	Atari
4	4	10	Zaxxon	Sega
5	-	5	Joust	Williams
6	2	10	Tron	Midway
7	9	13	Tempest	Atari
8	5	12	Ms. Pac-Man	Midway
9	-	4	Jungle Hunt	Taito
10	-	9	Robotron	Williams

Be sure to clip and mail the Electronic Games popularity poll ballot. We want to know what your favorites are!

THE HOTSEAT

Reviews of New Products

RATINGS: 10 - Pure gold and about as good as a game could be. A rare rating.

9 - An outstanding, state-of-the-art game.

8 - A very good to excellent game.

7 - A good game.

6 - Better than average, but maybe not for everyone.

5 - An average game that does what it promises.

1-4 - The item has serious flaws.

KEY: The information heading each review follows the same simple format. First is the name of the item, then its classification and, if it's a home arcade software program, the system/s with which it's compatible. Finally, there's the manufacturer's name.

CRITICS THIS ISSUE: TF-Tracie Forman; AK-Arnie Katz; CK-Charlene Komar; JW-Joyce Worley

CARNIVAL/Videogame Cartridge (for ColecoVision)/Coleco

If you miss the thrill of the old-time shooting galleries, step right up to this piece of arcade nostalgia. Use your rifle to pick off moving targets, start and stop the organ pipes, and keep hungry ducks away from your ammo. This home adaptation of the popular coin-op virtually duplicates the original game down to nice touches like the satisfying "ping" when your bullet hits the mark. A solid, playable game sure to please the most discriminating target shooters. (TF) Rating: 8

NO ESCAPE/Videogame Cartridge (for Atari 2600)/Imagic

This videogame version of Jason and the Golden Fleece pits the gamer as the mythological hero battling swarms of angry Furies. Knock out one group of enemies to gain a way out of the Temple, only to face more furious Furies. "No Escape" features the type of simple attractive graphics found in Imagic's "Dragonfire", as well as challenging play action, progressive difficulty levels, and even a happy ending. A solid action game. (TF) Rating: 8

REALSPORTS TENNIS/Videogame Cartridge (for Atari 2600)/Atari

Here's more evidence that 1972, the year in which "Pong" made its first splash, was really a long time ago. "RealSports Tennis" is a one- or two-player sports simulation that can be played in either mode at two different speeds. There's no way to beat around the bush: this cart is mighty, mighty close to Activision's "Tennis" title. The Atari effort differs in that it includes a few luxuries, such as a true-to-life scoring system and on-screen scoreboard, which add to the enjoyment of the participants. The graphics are, in general, pretty good, with the players rendered in considerable detail. One unique feature is that putting the system on the hardest difficulty setting has the effect of requiring combatants to make sure the electronic ball hits flush against the little racquets, rather than merely altering speed or angles of deflection for the ball. Not breathtakingly original, but very good. (AK) Rating: 8

FORTRESS OF NARZOD/Videogame Cartridge (for Vectrex)/GCE

Fly a spaceship through the twisted and difficult passageway, doing fire battles with the forces guarding the Fortress. Three waves defend each level,

flying toward the player in squadrons. Destroy the first and the next appears until all three groups are dispatched. Then the words "you may pass" magically appear on screen, and the ship can fly the rest of the way up the path through the portal. Then another stretch of roadway appears with another trilogy of guardian forces. They fire missiles toward the player's ship, and cannonfire ricochets around the screen creating a barrage of death and danger for the player to survive in order to gain the next portal. An exciting high-skill contest, "Fortress of Narzod" is sure to keep the gamer busy for a long time before he destroys the gatekeeper and captures the fort. (JW)

Rating: 9

GRIDRUNNER/Computer Game (for VIC-20)/HES

Here's an interesting variation on the basic structure of Centipede-type games: a space contest. There's still a multi-part enemy that alters course when it hits obstacles and whose segments become obstacles themselves when blasted, but this time the game field is an orbiting grid that collects solar power. The foe? Alien droids, using the power to reproduce themselves and marshal an invasion force. Your gridrunner is out to stop them, running across the structure and up seven lines of grid. Enemy zappers cruise the edges, emitting deadly beams at sporadic intervals. The game is a clever version of a classic, but the pace is manic to the point of being crazed, which may discourage some players. (CK) Rating: 7

SPIDERS OF MARS/Computer Game (for VIC-20)/UMI

A combination scrolling shoot-out and invasion game, this hot-paced contest pits the patrolling Martian Space Fly against the Spiders of Mars and their interplanetary allies, the Bats of Saturn, the Dragonflies of Pluto and the Sand Hornets (who apparently are so nasty no planet claims them). "Smart" bombs, deadly webs, determined fly-eaters and alarmingly accurate missiles present a very tough situation indeed for the lone Fly. The action is fast and furious, and the less talented gamer may find it a bit too much, but there's plenty of variety for those with fast reflexes and dead-eye aim. (CK) Rating: 8

PREPPIE II (Computer Game (for Atari 4-8-1200)/Scott Adams

Russ Whetmore, creator of "Preppie", strikes again! This time, the gamer guides Wadsworth through three interconnected mazes populated by such dangers as radioactive frogs and the lawnmowers from the first disk of what will eventually become an arcading trilogy. Wadsworth can scroll off screen from one labyrinth to the next, but all three must be completely painted before moving to the next round of play. A cloaking device provides the hero with the power to become temporarily invisible, but the computerist will have to watch the gauge at the bottom of the screen to avoid running out of invisibility power just when the frogs are hopping closer for the kill. Superior graphics, varied play-action and Whetmore's sense of humor stamp "Preppie II" as a worthy follow-up to the original. (AK) Rating: 8

RENAISSANCE/Computer Game (for VIC-20)/UMI

Known by a variety of names from Renaissance to Reversi and a few in between, this classic strategy game still involves placing discs, black on one side and white on the other, in such a way as to flip your opponent's pieces to your color. This version offers plenty of extras, from 8 skill levels in contest with the machine, to the ability to tape a position or game. Change sides, take back moves, restart games, or ask the computer for suggestions, as the whim takes you. This should be an attractive cartridge for both the beginner and the experienced player. (CK) Rating: 8

MERRY-CO-ROUND: John Sculley has been named the new president and chief executive officer for APPLE COMPUTER, succeeding A. C. Markkula, Jr., who will remain on the board of directors for the company. Sculley was formerly president of Pepsi-Cola...HAYDEN BOOK CO. has appointed David Edwards as General Manager. Mr. Edwards was formerly editor in chief of McCraw-Hill's computing and educational software publications...Edrick Haggans is the new Marketing Manager of DATA EAST. The company says that the demand for the new Multi Conversion Kits, interchangeable game systems, and new games being introduced, necessitates this staff addition... Nancy Anderton is the new manager of educational publishing for SIERRA ONLINE. Ms. Anderton has wide experience in education, both as text-book writer and instructor, as well as publishing experience for leading educational book publishers...MACNETIC TAPE INTERNATIONAL (MTI) appointed Stephen F. Milam as president. Milam will continue to hold his position as president of American Video Tape Manufacturing Co. (AVT)...Bill Reiter is the new Sales Manager for SEGA ELECTRONICS. Reiter formerly was with Tomy, CBS, Ideal Toy Co., and Mattel...William Peltier has joined BALLY MANUFACTURING as Vice President of Corporate Communications. He'll head up all communications activities for this leisure-time company...Duane Blough resigned as president of SEGA ELECTRONICS, to pursue other interests. Frank Fogelman will take on the duties of Chief Operating Officer...Eric Gaer joined FRANK BARTH as VP of Account Services. He'll oversee west coast accounts including Broderbund, Datamost and other Barth clients...Dr. Alfred Moyer, formerly the U.S. Dept. of Higher Education's Deputy Assistant Secretary during the Carter administration, will be the National Educational Sales Manager for the Home Computer Division of ATARI. He'll be responsible for sales programs targeted at elementary, high school and college educators, exploring "all the possible uses of home computers in education"...Rick Musemeche is the new Corporate Merchandise Manager for THE CAME PEDDLER, and will work toward providing the stores in this Texas chain with better ways to display and feature merchandise.

CLIMB CRISIS MOUNTAIN Here's how to tour a volcano without getting hurt.
FOR VOLCANIC THRILLS "Crisis Mountain" by Synergistic Software, formerly for the Apple, now has been released on disk for the Atari computers. A terrorist planted nuclear bombs in an active volcano, and they must be defused. Maneuver through volcanic boulders, falling debris and molten lava, to defuse the bombs and save the Pacific Northwest. Secret loot adds points, but being bitten by a radioactive bat dooms the careless gamer.

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